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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/LOGGERFO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/18/2011
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KWBG](#) [KPAL](#) [KDEM](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: FAYAD CALLS FOR LEADERSHIP, SUGGESTS BARGHOUTI IN
FRONT OF MCCAIN/LIEBERMAN

CLASSIFIED BY: ACTING PRINCIPAL OFFICER THOMAS M. DUFFY, PER REASONS 1.
4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) BEGIN SUMMARY. SENATORS MCCAIN (AZ), LIEBERMAN (CT), COLLINS (ME), THUNE (SD), AND REPRESENTATIVE KIRK (IL) MET DECEMBER 18 WITH PLC MEMBER AND FORMER MINISTER OF FINANCE SALAM FAYYAD AND SAID AFTERWARDS THAT THEY WERE UPLIFTED BY HIS OPTIMISM IN THE FACE OF A WORSENING PALESTINIAN CRISIS. FAYYAD DESCRIBED THE INTENSITY OF INTRA-PALESTINIAN VIOLENCE AS GREATER THAN EVER BEFORE. HE CHARACTERIZED THE ENVIRONMENT FOLLOWING PA PRESIDENT MAHMOUD ABBAS (ABU MAZEN) CALL FOR EARLY ELECTIONS AS ONE WHICH HAS EQUAL LIKELIHOOD OF RISING VIOLENCE AS OF A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. CALLING ABU MAZEN "PASSIVE" OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, FAYYAD SAID PALESTINIANS DESPERATELY NEED LEADERSHIP (MORE THAN MONEY) IN ORDER TO GET SECURITY AND INDICATED THAT IMPRISONED FATAH LEADER MARWAN BARGHOUTI MIGHT HAVE THE SUPPORT TO PROVIDE SUCH LEADERSHIP IF RELEASED FROM PRISON. END SUMMARY

ESCALATION OR AGREEMENT?

¶2. (C) PLC MEMBER AND FORMER FINANCE MINISTER SALAM FAYYAD TOLD CODEL MCCAIN IN A DECEMBER 18 MEETING THAT HE BELIEVES AFTER PA PRESIDENT MAHMOUD ABBAS (ABU MAZEN) REFERRED TO EARLY ELECTIONS IN HIS DECEMBER 16 SPEECH, THE PROBABILITY THAT VIOLENCE WILL ESCALATE AND THE PROBABILITY OF A POLITICAL AGREEMENT EACH ROSE SIMULTANEOUSLY. FAYYAD POINTED TO SYRIA (MORE THAN IRAN OR ANY ARAB STATE) AS THE DETERMINING EXTERNAL FACTOR IN THE WAY THAT THE BALANCE TILTS. ASKED ABOUT THE REGIONAL CONTEXT, FAYAD SAID A NEW SECURITY DOCTRINE IS NEEDED, AND SUCH A DOCTRINE SHOULD LOOK AT HOW CONVENTIONAL MILITARY POWER IS NOW & BLUNTED,8 CITING HIZBOLLAH,S WIDELY PERCEIVED VICTORY) BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL - OVER THE SUMMER AS A PRIME EXAMPLE. HE REPEATEDLY URGED THE NEED FOR PATIENCE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS, ON ALL SIDES. FAYAD SAID ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS MUST &CHANGE THE WAY WE LOOK AT EACH OTHER8, PAINTING HAMAS AS A COMMON NEMESIS. ASKED ABOUT IRAN, FAYAD DESCRIBED THE SAUDIS, EMIRATIS, JORDANIANS, AND EGYPTIANS AS AN EFFECTIVE COUNTERBALANCE. HE ADDED THAT THE SO-CALLED "ARAB QUARTET" IS INCREASINGLY ENGAGED AND WILLING DO MORE THAN THROW MONEY AT THE PROBLEM. COUNSELING PATIENCE AND WISE JUDGMENT, FAYAD SAID THE STAKES ARE HIGH, BUT HE IS FULL OF HOPE.

ABU MAZEN: IN OR OUT?

¶3. C) ASKED IF ABU MAZEN WILL RUN IF THERE ARE EARLY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, FAYAD NOTED A RECENT POLL IN WHICH ABU MAZEN IS POLLING EVEN WITH PM HANNIYEH FAYYAD ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ABU MAZEN HAS SAID HE DOES NOT INTEND TO RUN, BUT INSISTED THAT IT IS STILL EARLY. FAYYAD SAID HE HAS

BEEN DISAPPOINTED BY ABU MAZEN AND DESCRIBED THE PA PRESIDENT'S TWO YEARS AS CHARACTERIZED BY PASSIVITY AND ACCOMMODATION. BUT HE SAID ABU MAZEN WAS DIFFERENT DURING HIS DECEMBER 16 SPEECH AND THE DIFFERENCE WAS OVERDUE. MORE THAN ANYTHING, FAYYAD SAID, PALESTINIAN NEED LEADERSHIP TO FULFILL THEIR BASIC NEEDS, SECURITY FOREMOST AMONG THEM. FAYYAD DOWNPLAYED THE CONSTANT SPECULATION ABOUT AN ABBAS-OLMERT MEETING, CALLING IT &A PATHOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIP8 WHERE TOO MUCH TIME IS INVESTED IN SIMPLY TRYING TO SET UP A MEETING. INSTEAD, HE SAID, TIME SHOULD BE SPENT ON CONCRETE, PRAGMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS.

¶4. (C) FAYYAD TOLD CODEL MCCAIN THAT THERE ARE SMALL BUT SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE EVERY DAY LIVES OF PALESTINIANS THAT THE GOI COULD MAKE AND THAT WOULD HELP ABU MAZEN. HE SUGGESTED THAT NOT ALL OF THE 639 CHECKPOINTS IN THE WEST BANK AND THE TEN THOUSAND DETAINEES IN ISRAELI CONTROL ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE ISRAELI SECURITY. IF A PALESTINIAN COULD TRAVEL EASILY FROM NABLUS TO RAMALLAH, MINDSETS WOULD CHANGE, HE SAID.

¶5. (C) ASKED ABOUT FINANCIAL NEEDS, FAYYAD SAID ABU MAZEN COULD CERTAINLY USE FUNDS TO BOOST SECURITY, BUT THAT IT IS THE JOB OF THE HAMAS-LED GOVERNMENT TO DELIVER SERVICES, AND NO AMOUNT OF MONEY DELIVERED TO THE PRESIDENCY WOULD HELP ACCOMPLISH THAT GOAL. HE ESTIMATES THAT THE AMOUNT OF MONEY AVAILABLE TO THE HAMAS-LED PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT IS APPROXIMATELY EQUAL TO THE AMOUNT THAT WAS AVAILABLE TO PREVIOUS, FATAH-LED GOVERNMENTS, DESPITE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL RESTRICTIONS. MOST SIGNIFICANT FOR FAYYAD IS THE RECENT &SUBSTANTIAL DISINTEGRATION OF THE HUMAN CONDITION8 AND INSTITUTIONAL DECAY.

MARWAN BARGHOUTI

¶6. (C) FAYYAD HE WOULD BE MEETING SOON WITH JAILED FATAH LEADER MARWAN BARGHOUTI. HE SAID HE IS INTRIGUED BY BARGHOUTI, WHO HE IDENTIFIED AS BELONGING TO THE "PEACE CAMP" UNTIL THE SECOND INTIFADA AND WHOSE POLLING NUMBERS SUGGEST HE COULD PROVIDE A LEADERSHIP TO CHALLENGE HAMAS.

¶7. (C) COMMENT. ON THE WAY OUT THE DOOR, EACH MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION INDIVIDUALLY THANKED FAYYAD FOR WHAT THEY SAID WAS THE MOST POSITIVE MEETING OF THEIR ENTIRE TRIP AND FOR HIS HOPEFUL EMPHASIS IN DISCUSSING THE SITUATION. END COMMENT.

¶8. (U) CODEL MCCAIN DID NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CLEAR THIS CABLE.
DUFFY